

DEPT. OF STATE

Contra Cartesianas

2009.02.247.



Curios and Relics
China, Kitchenware, &
Glassware
Silver
Owned by Lincolns

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection



On Front Basket

Basic of?

1860

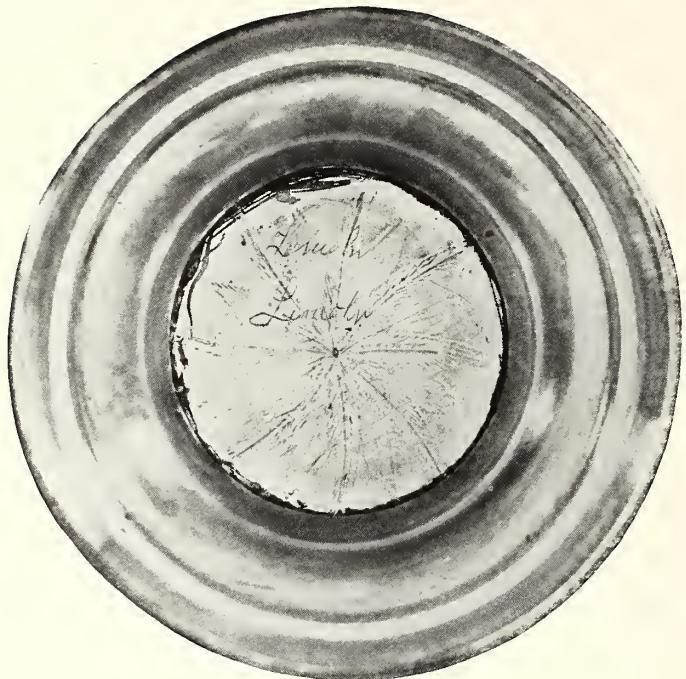
WITH LINCOLN'S NAME SCRATCHED ON BY HIM

80. LINCOLN (ABRAHAM). Sheffield silver-plate fruit basket, once owned by President Abraham Lincoln. Diameter, 12 inches.

13.
A MOST INTERESTING MEMENTO OF OUR MARTYRED PRESIDENT. The name "Lincoln" is engraved on the handle. On the bottom of this basket President Lincoln scratched his surname, twice, with his pocket knife fearing that, when he sent the piece to the jeweler to have his name engraved on it, another basket might be substituted.

Accompanying this basket is an affidavit signed by the present owner, which reads,—"This silver fruit basket owned by Abraham Lincoln when he lived in Springfield, Illinois, at the time he was elected President of the United States in 1860. Mr. Lincoln personally took the fruit basket to the jeweler to have his name, Lincoln, engraved on the handle and for fear it would be exchanged he took his penknife out of his pocket and scratched his name on the bottom of the basket, which can now be plainly seen. My great-uncle William Windoes was a close friend of Mr. Lincoln in Springfield, Ill., during the time he ran for office. Mr. Lincoln decided to dispose of the household goods he did not need or would not take with him to the White House. Another great-uncle, Elias R. Bowen, of Chicago, Illinois, in whose home my mother and I in after years lived, was notified by Mr. Windoes of this sale, which they both attended and Mr. Bowen bought this silver plated fruit basket as well as other things, and they have been in the family ever since. This fruit basket was purchased for its beauty and historic value, and came into my possession upon the death of my mother who came into possession of it through her uncle Elias R. Bowen who purchased it at the auction sale of the contents of President Lincoln's home in Springfield before he left to take up the duties of President of the United States."

[SEE REPRODUCTION]



BOTTOM OF SHEFFIELD SILVER-PLATE FRUIT BASKET WHERE LINCOLN
SCRATCHED HIS SURNAME TWICE WITH HIS POCKET KNIFE
FEARING THAT, WHEN HE SENT IT TO THE JEWELER
TO HAVE HIS NAME ENGRAVED ON IT, ANOTHER
BASKET MIGHT BE SUBSTITUTED

[SEE NO. 80]

14
LINCOLN NATIONAL
MAIL DEPARTMENT
Referred to

REC'D AUG 18 1934

Answered

Kenosha Wis
Aug 17th 34
Lincoln National Life
Insurance Co.,
Fort Wayne,
Indiana.

Dear Sirs:-

I want to ask
if you are interested
in one half dozen James
Silver tea spoons owned
and used by Mr. Abraham
Lincoln in Springfield
Illinois. Authenticity
established.

I am deeply interested in
antiques and I came
into possession some
time ago through buying

some things from an
elderly lady, (closing out
her home) Mrs. , when a
little child visited and
played with a family
in Springfield whose
back yard joined ours
in Lincoln's back yard.
She told very interesting
things - the most famous
who visited there a great
deal being one of the high
lights in her memories.
I have decided to sell
them, and am informed
that you have an ex-
tensive collection of Lincoln
relics.

I shall appreciate
hearing from you.

Very truly
Mrs. Pearl Madely
1925-53rd St Kenosha. Wis.

Silverware

August 23, 1934

Miss Pearl March
1925 - 53rd Street
Kenosha, Wisconsin

My dear Madam:

I am very much interested indeed in the contacts of your family with the Lincolns but I do regret that we do not collect Lincoln curios so we would not be in the market for the silver spoons which were originally in the possession of the Lincoln family.

Our collection here is confined almost entirely to books and pictures and for that reason, we would have no place for the very interesting mementoes which you have preserved.

We will keep in mind what you have, however, and if opportunity presents itself, will put you in touch with those who might like to acquire the Lincoln items in your possession.

Your postscript referring to annuities for women is being referred to our representative in Kenosha, Mr. Herman A. Thiel, who I am sure will be pleased to call upon you and explain just what we have that might fit your needs.

Very sincerely yours,

Director

LAW:AAM

CC: H. A. Thiel

504 N. EAST 16TH STREET
OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLA.

June 4th, 1945.

Managers -

Lincoln National Life Foundation,
Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Dear Sirs : -

I have been reading your calls for (Hobbie's) certain Lincolnia. I have an item that may be of unusual interest to your collection with reference to our past president. It a very large silver coffee urn, which was presented to Mr. Lincoln the evening of his inauguration by the Philadelphia Republican Club.

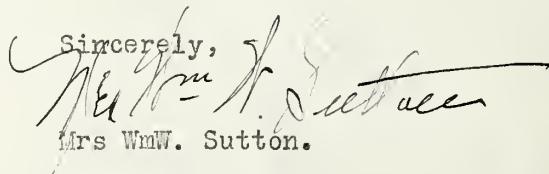
As I have just said it is large- including base and stem in which the bowl rests is 26 1/2 inches; Diameter 12 inches; Capacity of bowl three galons. Has a perfect faucet for drawing off the coffee. It is beautifully bordered with hand wrought band, has the profile or silhouette of Lincoln on side of body of urn. The top or fineal is the lovely prize winner - "Nancy Hanks" named for his mother.

I have had this piece thoroughly examined and weighed by U.S. standard of weights and it is coin silver and weighs 23 pounds

I can think of nothing better or more appropriate for a Lincoln collection than this piece. Only one thing is lacking and that is the authenticating papers have been lost. The piece was purchased more than 12 years ago from Mr. J.B. Reeder of "Reeder's Barn" fame, and it was a prize possession of his father- also of Kansas City, Mo, and I was to receive the papers authenticating the origin and possesser of the urn when soon after the purchase Mr. Reeder died, and the papers have never been found, and I have only the word of his son as to their accuracy.

The very fact that the quality is so outstanding, the bust - silhouette so perfect and in silver creates a live interest and a profound reverence for the whole work. I am offering for sale this piece at much less than I gave for it which is \$500.00 I am told its salvage value is even more, but the work is too lovely to destroy in any such way.

May I hear from you if interested.

Sincerely,

Mrs Wm W. Sutton.

June 8, 1945

Mrs. William W. Sutton
504 N. East 16th St.
Oklahoma City, Okla.

My dear Madam:

While I have been greatly interested in reading about your interesting Lincoln curio I cannot feel that we could properly display it here in our Foundation. Of course, the most important fact is that there are no papers of information which prove its authenticity. That would be very necessary I think before any museum would care to make any statement with reference to it. However, even with that I do not think that our facilities here would allow us to properly display such a large item. Most of our exhibit cases are built for much smaller pieces. Thank you nevertheless for it to our attention.

Very truly yours,

LAW:WM

Director

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SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

February 28, 1958

Dr. R. Gerald McMurtry
Lincoln Lore
The Lincoln National Life Insurance
Company
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Dear Dr. McMurtry:

Enclosed is a copy of the press release recently issued on the Lincoln Silver and Cutlery presented to the Museum by Mr. Lincoln Isham of Dorset, Vermont. If you would like photographs of the silver, we will be happy to supply them.

Please call on me if I can be of any help in the future.

Sincerely yours,

Wilcomb E. Washburn

Wilcomb E. Washburn
Acting Curator
Division of Political
History

Enc.

from the

SMITHSONIAN
INSTITUTION

Washington 25, D. C.



NEWS RELEASE DATE

For immediate release

LINCOLN SILVER AND CUTLERY

Washington, D. C., Feb. 20, 1958.--The Smithsonian Institution has received as a gift from Mr. Lincoln Isham, of Dorset, Vermont, a set of steak and chop knives and a seven-piece silver service which had belonged to his great grandmother, Mrs. Abraham Lincoln. The 48 knives and the matching carving sets have silver-mounted, mother-of-pearl handles, and they are monogrammed "M T L" for Mary Todd Lincoln. They are housed in a specially made mahogany, velvet-lined case with a brass escutcheon.

The silver service which belonged to Mrs. Lincoln is made of Gorham coin silver with a repoussé floral and strap-work pattern with an engraved crest on one side and the monogram "M T L" on the other. The service consists of a large oval tray, the hot-water urn on a stand with a burner, the coffeepot, teapot, hot-water pot, cream pitcher, sugar urn, and waste bowl.

The specimens have been placed on exhibition in the West Hall of the Smithsonian's Arts and Industries Building at 9th Street and Jefferson Drive in Washington.

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Note to Editors.--Press photographs illustrating this story may be obtained from the Division of Political History, U. S. National Museum, Washington 25, D. C.



Silver

March 10, 1958

Mr. Wilcomb E. Washburn,
Acting Curator
Division of Political History
Smithsonian Institution
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Washburn:

I was glad to have your letter of February 28 containing the press release concerning the Lincoln silver and cutlery which was recently presented to the Smithsonian Institution by Mr. Lincoln Isham of Dorset, Vermont.

I would be delighted to have photographs of the silver which you have offered to supply. These photographs will find a very important place in our files.

Thanking you for calling my attention to this matter I remain

Yours sincerely,

RGMcMurtry:pj

Director



IF REPRODUCED OR RESOLD
CREDIT SHOULD BE GIVEN

THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
NEGATIVE #

1980.1.17.10001

This silver-gilt pitcher was presented to Lincoln by "Washington friends" on his Inauguration of 1861. We have been unable to find any contemporary accounts of this presentation or who the "friends" were. If you should ever run across any reference to such a gift, we would appreciate hearing about it.





TIFFANY & CO.

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